of primary weavers cooperative societies at a concessional rate of interest and also procurement, marketing and trading-in-yarn activities by apex/regional weaver's cooperative societies. Individual weavers are also provided working capital as per normal District Credit Plan.

(d) Some of the steps taken by Govt. to provide adequate yarn at a lesser price to handloom weavers are: operation of the Hank Yarn Obligation Scheme, loan assistance to the National Cooperative Development Corporation for setting up new weavers' cooperative spinning mills and expansion of capacity of the existing mills and the yarn supply operations (including supply of yarn to handloom weavers at mill-gate prices) of the National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC). The recently introduced Yarn Depot Scheme operated by NHDC is subsidised to the extent of 5% of the value of yarn supplied to provide for a part of the cost of transportation interest on working capital and other overheads.

Setting up of a Slag Cement Plant at Rourkela

289. SHRI BAIKUNTHA NATH SAHU: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal to set up a slag cement plant at Rourkela in Orissa has been pending since long;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for delay; and

(c) what steps are being taken to give early clearance to that project ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Closure of Iron Ore Mines in Orissa

290. SHRI BAIKUNTHA NATH SAHU: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of iron ore mines in Orissa have been closed down;

(b) whether some more iron ore mines have fallen sick or are on the verge of closure;

(c) if so, what are the reasons of the sickness and closure of those mines in Orissa; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to revive those mines?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Only a few small mines have not reported any production during 1989.

(c) and (d) Closure of some mines may be due to management or financial problems. The iron ore market both domestic and export is presently buoyant and demand for ore is on the up and up. Price of iron ore has also increased.

Creation of All India Election Service

291. SHRI BAIKUNTHA NATH SAHU: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleaed to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal for the creation of an All India Election Service;

(b) if so, the date from which the Service would be created; and

(c) what would be the main functions of the proposed Service?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI): (a) to (c) A suggestion has been put forward by the Chief Election Commissioner with regard to the creation of an All India Election Service. It has been placed before the Committee on Electoral Reforms for consideration.

Foundry Pig Iron Projects in Orissa

292. SHRI BAIKUNTHA NATH SAHU: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the number and locations of the Foundry Pig Iron Projects set up in Orissa;

(b) the capacity of each of these projects;

(c) whether Government have any proposal to set up more such Plants in Orissa; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI) : (a) and (b) Only one pig iron unit, with a capacity of 1 lakh tonne per annum has so far been set up in Orissa at Barbil (Keonjhar).

(c) and (d) With a view to encourage production of pig iron in the secondary sector this industry has been delicensed. Interested entrepreneurs have also been assured of assistance. Certain parties have been issued rgistration for the establishment of new pig iron unit in Orissa.

Smuggled Goods Confiscated by Customs Authorities

293. SHRI M. VINCENT : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the value in rupees of smuggled goods confiscated by the Customs Authorities during 1989 ; and

(b) what is the value in rupees of the arms and ammunitions confiscated during 1989 especially in Tamil Nadu?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE) : (a) The total value of the smuggled goods recovered by the Customs authorities all over India during 1989 was Rs. 554.59 crores.

(b) The total value of arms and ammunitions recovered in Tamil Nadu State by the Customs authorities in 1989 was reportedly Rs. 1.64 lakhs.

Debt Service Ratio

294. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) what is the total external debt as on the 31st December, 1989 ;

(b) what is the debt service ratio at present ; and

(c) what steps have been taken to reduce the debt service ratio?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE) : (a) The total medium and long-term external debt excluding NRI deposits at the end of March, 89 is estimated to be Rs. 68831 crores.